

Thread Tales: Reviving Pakistan's Hand Embroidery Traditions in the Machine Age

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Abstract— This paper examines the revival of hand embroidery in Pakistan through the framework of "Thread Tales," contextualizing it within global artisan movements and cultural sustainability, and portraying embroidery as a medium that is expressive, narrative, and culturally regenerative. The study investigates the integration of storytelling within traditional stitchwork and the persistence of these embodied practices amid mechanized production. It accomplishes this by utilizing qualitative mixed-methods research, encompassing interviews with Pakistani artisans, visual analysis of handcrafted embroidery samples, observational field notes from textile-producing regions, and a critical synthesis of literature from feminist craft theory, postcolonial studies, and global fashion discourse. The research investigates motifs, textures, and material choices as vehicles for cultural and emotional transmission via visual ethnography and auto-ethnographic creative practice. The findings indicate that hand needlework functions as a cultural text that conveys themes of identity, memory, belonging, and resilience, particularly through the utilization of color, repetition, symbolic patterns, and the tactile irregularities of hand-stitched surfaces. The study's creative part is a "Thread Tale" made up of three embroidered pieces that show how traditional methods can be rethought using modern visual language to tell stories about individuals and groups. These results show that handicrafts can be a creative way to fight against industrial homogeneity because they offer depth, intimacy, and cultural continuity that mass production can't. The findings of the research show that hand embroidery, as shown in "Thread Tales," has a lot of potential to bring fashion back in line with place, culture, and human experience. It also supports fashion practices that are good for the environment and says that embroidery is more than just a decorative element; it is a living storehouse of cultural knowledge and changing identity.

I. INTRODUCTION

In Pakistan, hand embroidery plays an important role in the daily lives of women, their artistic expression, and their cultural memory. The fast growth of mass-fashion

economies and mechanical textile production is making it less relevant today, even though it has always been a way for women to pass on aesthetic knowledge, identity, and emotional stories from one generation to the next. As

industrial embroidery becomes faster and more popular, traditional needlework could be seen as slow, uncompetitive, or nostalgic (Khan, 2011). Nevertheless, handmade textiles persist as vital conduits of intangible cultural heritage, preserving embodied knowledge and communal identity, as indicated by international craft research (UNESCO, 2003; Karpova, 2019). Recent research on the global textile revival indicates that needlework persists through reinterpretation rather than replication; this occurs when artisans and designers modify traditional techniques to suit modern contexts (Ghosh, 2014; Adamson, 2010).

According to new research in narrative textiles and feminist craft practice (Rani, 2021; Eason, 2023), needlework is not only a way for women to express their feelings and tell their life stories, but it is also a way for them to express memory, strength, and personal identity through a different visual language. Scholars highlight that needlework traditions such as Phulkari, Sozni, and Kantha remain deeply embedded in generational transmission systems within South Asian contexts, relying more on embodied memory, repetition, and observation than on formal education (Sharma & Gupta, 2024; Chakravarty, 2019). This makes embroidery a living cultural text that is both rooted in tradition and open to change.

In response to this, the present study examines the revival of Pakistani hand embroidery through Thread Tales, an ethnographic and creative-practice investigation that reconceptualizes stitching as a narrative form. The study examines the reinterpretation of traditional processes within contemporary design frameworks through the integration of photographic data, dialogues with Pakistani women artisans, and the researcher's own embroidered creations. This study also looks at how technology can improve, rather than replace, cultural craftsmanship in a time when digital tools, like AI-generated visual prompts, are being used more and more in creative work. This enables novel interpretations while preserving the emotional and cultural richness of hand-stitched craftsmanship (Luckman, 2015; Pritchard, 2020). In the end, the study says that narrative-centered needlework is a strong form of cultural resilience because it combines individual creativity with group legacy in ways that fight against industrial uniformity and help keep Pakistani textile traditions alive.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review looks at four important academic works that deal with the revival of hand embroidery in Pakistan: (1) Hand embroidery as intangible cultural heritage; (2) Narrative textiles and feminist craft practice; (3) Craft revival and mechanization; and (4) Slow fashion

and digital artisan visibility. These topics show that hand stitching is an important cultural, economic, and emotional activity, and they also point out areas that need more research.

2.1 HAND EMBROIDERY AS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGES

The concept of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) emphasizes the "knowledge, skills, and traditions" transmitted across generations, essential for preserving cultural identity and fostering community cohesion (UNESCO, 2003). In this case, needlework is not only a skill but also a way to share memories, symbols, and aesthetic values. Research on Sujni embroidery in Bihar illustrates how stitching traditions maintain local identity and narrative practices while fostering the economic and social empowerment of women artisans (Sharma and Gupta, 2024). Studies of traditional textile techniques in Southeast Asia and Zmijanje needlework in Bosnia reveal analogous relationships among stitch language, cultural symbolism, and embodied memory (Yang et al., 2018; UNESCO, 2014).

Experts on South Asian textile heritage say that hand embroidery is a living cultural text that is deeply rooted in history but is also constantly being renewed by everyday use. Studies on Eastern European textile heritage (Karinova, 2017) also show how important needlework is as an intangible cultural asset that is passed down through the community. Scrase (2003) emphasizes that handwork endures as it conveys inherited cultural knowledge through physical movement, offering women a culturally endorsed means of expression. Textile historians, such as Barber (1994), assert that stitch-based traditions function as cultural repositories, utilizing embodied craftsmanship to safeguard women's knowledge, memories, and lived experiences. These perspectives help put Pakistani hand needlework in the context of lived history, where patterns, rhythms, and techniques stand for shared memories and identities.

2.2 NARRATIVE TEXTILES, MEMORY, AND FEMINIST CRAFT PRACTICE

Feminist art research is increasingly concentrating on textile craft as a medium for storytelling and emotional expression. Rani (2021) asserts that female artists are contesting gendered hierarchies in "fine art" by reappropriating stitching as a medium to convey their autobiographical and corporeal experiences. Research on narrative textiles shows that stitching is a long-lasting, physical skill that lets artists write symbolic messages, memories, and feelings on fabric (Eason, 2023). This method shows textiles as "crafted stories" by using symbolic patterns and repeated movements. The study of South Asian crafts examines

analogous connections among women's narratives, memory, and textile production (John, 2013). Ghosh's (2014) study on Kantha embroidery offers further evidence of narrative stitching as a mnemonic device, with motifs acting as visual representations of cultural and personal experiences.

Feminist craft scholars like Bryan-Wilson (2017) and Parker (2010) also say that embroidery is important for more than just emotional work. Practice-based research also shows that it can help with mental health and therapy. For example, studies on drawn-thread embroidery and trauma in South Asia show that stitching can help people "remember" things, which is a way to put broken feelings back together and bring back memories that have been pushed away (The Jugaad Project, 2024). These points of view support the idea that Thread Tales and the stories of Pakistani women embroiderers are narrative textile practices.

2.3 CRAFT REVIVAL, MECHANIZATION, AND THE SURVIVAL OF TRADITIONAL EMBROIDERY

Research on Pakistani crafts shows that there are still problems between automated textile manufacturing and handmade customs. Khan (2011) says that even though the economy is tough, regional needlework traditions like Sindhi and Balochi work are still very important for rural people to make a living and build their identities. Yang et al. (2018) assert that artisans, particularly women, are vital for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage due to their inherited skills.

Scholars around the world link the renewed interest in traditional embroidery to a rejection of standardized fashion systems, a desire for sustainability, and a wish to keep cultural traditions alive. Singh and Singh (2025) stress how important it is to keep records, pass on skills, and value history in sustainable fashion systems. Their analysis also shows that there isn't enough empirical research on revival at the local and community levels. Studies on Gujarati Rabari embroidery and Indian Kantha embroidery exemplify analogous case studies that illustrate how interest in handcrafted textiles promotes cultural preservation and economic empowerment (Kumar, 2024; Chakravarty, 2019).

Mechanization research shows that industrialization speeds up the decline of slow-moving, labor-intensive methods and increases the symbolic value of handwork (Adamson, 2010). This contradiction shows that Pakistani embroidery is a place where handmade originality and cultural diversity still exist as a response to mass production.

2.4 SLOW FASHION, DIGITAL PLATFORMS, AND ARTISAN

Hand stitching is depicted in slow fashion literature as a solution to the uniformity and excess of fast fashion. People are valuing handmade clothes more and more because they are real, last a long time, and are made by people (Brown and Vacca, 2022; Fletcher, 2010). From this perspective, embroidery changes from a decorative item to a form of cultural production that links the maker, the wearer, and the place.

Digital platforms are very important for the survival and visibility of Pakistan's creative groups these days. Burney (2020) shows how online marketplaces, social media, and digital storytelling let craftspeople sell directly to customers, get more followers, and keep regional craft traditions alive. International research (Luckman, 2015; Pritchard, 2020) indicates that although digital maker-cultures create novel opportunities for recognition, they simultaneously expose artists to risks such as algorithmic visibility challenges, machine-generated imitation, and design theft. This split shows how important and fragile digital ecosystems are for keeping needlework trends alive.

2.5 GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

There remain considerable deficiencies in Pakistan-specific research, notwithstanding the extensive global examination of embroidery and craft revival. First, there is a scarcity of scholarly research focusing on the lived experiences of Pakistani women embroiderers in comparison to studies of artisans in India or other South Asian nations (Khan, 2011; Yang et al., 2018). Second, although sustainability and revival are increasingly examined in literature, there exists a paucity of research on embroidered pieces as narrative texts that express emotion, memory, and identity (Sharma and Gupta, 2024; Singh and Singh, 2025). Third, practice-based methods like the researcher's artistic needlework, interviews, and visual recording are still very rare in Pakistani textile studies.

The present study addresses these deficiencies by integrating interviews, visual documentation, and the Thread Tales creative-practice series. It gives the area a new point of view by showing how needlework can tell stories and how Pakistani women use their threads to show who they are, where they belong, and how they feel.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research methodology employed in this study is grounded in creative practice exploration, photographic documentation, and interviews. Qualitative methodologies are the most appropriate for exploring the lived experiences, emotions, and personal significances

articulated by women who engage in stitching, as the research aims to understand hand stitching as a narrative and culturally embedded practice. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with three to four Pakistani women who embroider either professionally or as a hobby. There were also pictures taken of the artists at work and of their finished pieces. These pictures helped us better understand what the participants said about how they stitched, what patterns they used, and what materials they chose. The researcher made the three embroidered pieces in the Thread Tales series using their own creative process. This also gave them a chance to think about how hand stitching can show story meaning and personal expression. The analysis employs thematic interpretation of interview transcripts, visual evaluation of images, and creative-practice outputs, grounded in ethical considerations related to consent, representation, and cultural knowledge respect.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN: QUALITATIVE MIXED-METHODS

The study employs a qualitative mixed-methods framework that includes creative-practice exploration, photographic documentation, and interviews. This method was chosen because it allows for a deep, interpretive understanding of how embroidery communicates narrative, cultural, and emotional significance in the daily lives of Pakistani women. Research that examines intangible cultural assets and personal narratives is especially conducive to qualitative inquiry, as it prioritizes human perspectives, subjective interpretations, and symbolic meaning over quantitative assessment.

The mixed-methods part of this design means that it brings together different qualitative sources, like the researcher's own observations of creative practice, visual materials collected through photography, and oral accounts from craftspeople. It does not include any quantitative data. The interviews helped us understand why the artists did what they did, how they remembered it, and how they felt about their crafts. The pictures of women stitching and their finished embroidery help put these stories in context by showing the materials, techniques, and settings in which their art is made. The Thread Tales creative-practice artworks add another layer of meaning by letting the researcher look at narrative embroidery in both a reflexive and experiential way. These methods together give a full and multi-layered picture of embroidery as a way to tell stories and show culture through art.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

The study utilized three primary qualitative sources for data collection: the researcher's personal creative process, photographs of artisans and their work, and interviews with Pakistani women involved in hand needlework. These

methods were chosen to show how embroidery can be a way for people to express themselves through both speech and art. Semi-structured interviews reveal the cultural importance that artists ascribe to their craft, alongside their individual experiences and emotional connections to stitching. Photographs taken during the interviews gave information about their working conditions, methods, equipment, and finished needlework projects. Furthermore, sensory data elucidating the emergence of narrative meaning through hand stitching was generated by the researcher's creative-practice development of the Thread Tales embroidered artworks. The integration of multiple data sources facilitated a thorough and nuanced comprehension of needlework as a medium of visual storytelling and intangible cultural heritage.

3.2.1 INTERVIEWS WITH ARTISANS

Three to four Pakistani women who do hand needlework for fun or to make money were interviewed in a semi-structured way. To show how easy it is to get local craft knowledge in both private and public settings, participants were chosen through informal networks. The main goal of the interviews was to learn about the cultural, emotional, and personal reasons behind their stitching habits. Some of the main topics were early learning experiences, passing on skills from one generation to the next, how stitching is used in everyday life, the symbolic meanings of motifs, and the feelings that come with making handmade art.

The semi-structured style made it easy for participants to talk to each other in a natural way, which helped them come up with story elements that are important for understanding needlework as a way to tell stories. Participants chose comfortable places for the interviews, and they gave their verbal consent before the conversation started. Every interview was written down, and participants gave their permission before any pictures were taken. These talks gave us important information that helped us understand the cultural memory, identity, and emotional expression that are part of hand needlework.

3.2.2 PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

Photographic documentation helped to put the interview material in context and make it more visual. During the interviews, pictures were taken of the ladies working, their hands moving, the tools they were using, and the needlework pieces they were making or had already made. The ladies gave their permission for the pictures to be taken. These photos helped them understand their craft techniques better by showing the materials, textures, stitches, and working conditions that were talked about in the interviews. Also, the pictures showed things like the rhythm of stitching, the closeness of home craft spaces, and the small details of thread, color, and design that were hard to put into

words. These visual aids gave us more qualitative information that helped us understand embroidery as an activity that is both expressive and part of a culture.

3.2.3 RESEARCHER'S CREATIVE PRACTICE: THREAD TALES

A key part of this study was the researcher's creative work on three embroidered pieces from the Thread Tales series. This hands-on part gave people a chance to think about and experience how hand needlework can show emotion, cultural meaning, and tell a story. The researcher cultivated an embodied awareness of the sensory and expressive dimensions that the participating artisans conveyed through hands-on engagement with fabric, thread, stitch selection, and motif creation.

As part of the design development process, the researcher first made rough hand-drawn sketches that showed early ideas for how things would look. After that, artificial intelligence image production was used to improve these sketches, making reference images with complex colors and arrangements. All of the embroidery was done by hand. The AI-generated images were only used as design aids to help with decisions about where to put motifs, what colors to use, and the overall layout. This use of AI-assisted images is in line with modern digital design workflows, but it still keeps the authenticity, authorship, and physical work of traditional craft practice.

The physical stitching process of the Thread Tales artworks made it easier to understand narrative needlework in a deeper, more thoughtful way. The researcher discovered many of the themes that the participants talked about, such as patience, emotional release, memory, and the close connection between creator and material, through painstaking, repetitive needlework. The creative-practice results served as both qualitative data and artworks, offering a reflective dimension for analyzing how thread, color, rhythm, and texture can visually convey identity, memory, generational knowledge, and personal narratives. In this way, the Thread Tales series showed how traditional hand stitching can be seen as a modern way to tell stories, in addition to supporting thematic analysis.

3.3 ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

Since the data was both narrative and visual, this study used a qualitative interpretive approach to analyze it. Thematic analysis of written notes and interview transcripts let recurring ideas, feelings, and cultural references come to light inductively from what participants said about how they stitched. The first readings focused on important ideas about learning experiences, generational knowledge, symbolic motifs, personal identity, and the emotional significance of embroidery. These ideas were expanded into broader

themes that illustrated how women convey and interpret meaning through their art.

The photographs taken during the interviews were looked at using an interpretive visual approach. The focus was on things like the artisan's working conditions, the materials they chose, the colors they used, and the way they moved their hands. These visual cues not only provide more context for the stories shared in the interviews, but they also help explain the physical and sensory aspects of stitching that participants often talked about. At the same time, a reflexive analysis of the researcher's creative process in making the Thread Tales artworks was done. This analysis looked at how choices about motif design, thread choice, stitch rhythm, and color over time revealed the story's intent. The combination of thematic, visual, and reflective study made it possible to have a multi-layered understanding of embroidery as a living, expressive, and culturally important art form.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The entire research process followed ethical guidelines to make sure that participants and their craft practices were treated with respect and care. All of the women who were interviewed said yes verbally after being fully informed of the study's goals before any data were collected. Participants were informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that they could cease participation at any time. To protect privacy, only a small amount of identifying information was used, and the paper does not list the names of participants unless they have given their permission.

Pictures of the artists' embroidery were only taken with their permission, and they were only used for scholarly presentations and study. It was important to show the participants' work in a way that was both accurate and respectful, since the craft is important to both the culture and the individual. The researcher's observations on creative practice were similarly considered, ensuring that individual ideas were articulated in dialogue with the artists' perspectives rather than in contradiction to them. The ethical approach aimed to honor the cultural contributions, skills, and dignity of the women whose needlework traditions are the focus of this research.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section shows the results of the interviews, the photographs, and the Thread Tales creative-practice artworks. These results show that even though mechanized manufacturing is becoming more common, hand embroidery is still an important cultural, emotional, and artistic activity for Pakistani women. The interviews reveal

how artists view embroidery as a medium for memory, identity, and, for certain individuals, financial assistance. The visual and creative-practice results show that traditional stitches and patterns can be changed into modern narrative forms. This section examines the potential of narrative-based embroidery to facilitate the cultural revival and contemporary relevance of hand-stitched crafts by analyzing these thematic concepts alongside the three embroidered works.

4.1 PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

The table below shows the demographic backgrounds, craft experience, and stitching methods of the four women who took part in the study. This helps to put the interview results in context. This table's short summary helps set up the thematic discussion that follows.

Table. 1. Overview of Interview Participants

Participant	Age	Location	Embroidery Role	Experience Level	Primary Techniques/ Styles	Motivations
Shazia	38	Gujranwala, Punjab	Full-time professional embroiderer	26+ years	Phulkari, Bagh, Punjabi floral work	Income generation; cultural continuity
Ayesha	24	Lahore, Punjab	Hobbyist embroiderer	Intermediate	French knots, mirror work, hoop art	Creativity, mindfulness, self-expression
Farzana	35	Multan, Punjab	Beginner hobbyist learner	1 year	Chain stitch, satin stitch, /Multani floral basics	Learning tradition, personal fulfillment
Naila	45	Faisalabad, Punjab	Part-time learner	20+ year	Cross-stitch, chain stitch, satin stitch	Extra income stress relief; teaching

4.2 THEMATIC FINDINGS FROM PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

Stitching was an important cultural and emotional activity for everyone who took part in the interviews, whether they did it for work or for fun. Shazia, who lives in Gujranwala and works full-time as an embroiderer, said that stitching is a family tradition that helps her family get by. Ayesha, who lived in Lahore, saw sewing as a relaxing way to be creative. Naila, a part-time embroiderer from Faisalabad, used needlework to make extra money and for fun. Farzana, on the other hand, was a beginner learning from her mother-in-law in Multan and saw embroidery as a way to connect with her family. When looked at as a whole, these testimonies show that hand needlework is still important to the culture, emotionally important, and adaptable in modern-day Pakistan.

4.2.1 GENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION AND EARLY LEARNING

All four participants linked their practices to family traditions. Shazia learned from her mother and Farzana learned from her mother-in-law how to do embroidery. This is still done informally in homes. Ayesha, who likes to do embroidery, even connected her early lessons from her aunt to her skill. These descriptions say that needlework is a kind of cultural memory that people pass down through everyday interactions at home instead of through formal lessons.

4.2.2 EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION, IDENTITY, AND MINDFULNESS

Participants described embroidery as emotionally anchoring. When Farzana finished her designs, she was calm and proud. Ayesha, on the other hand, saw stitching as a way to be mindful. Shazia and Naila thought of the craft as a sign of strength and self-worth because it helps them make money. Their experiences demonstrate how embroidery functions as both a form of expression and a therapeutic activity, fostering identity and emotional wellness.

4.2.3 PERCEPTIONS OF DECLINE AND REVIVAL IN THE AGE OF MECHANIZATION

Shazia and Naila still make a lot of money from embroidery. Naila used embroidery to pay for her children's school, but Shazia talked about how shop owners pay their workers too little and take advantage of them. Both said they were happy with their jobs, even though they had problems. Their stories show that embroidery can still give women financial freedom and independence, even in markets where prices are lower.

4.2.4 EMBROIDERY AS CONTEMPORARY CONNECTION AND PERSONAL EXPANSION

By embroidery, participants found personal meaning and reconnected with their cultural roots. Farzana saw embroidery as a way to keep her family's traditions alive, while Ayesha saw it as a way to express herself creatively. These stories suggest that revival includes not only the preservation of culture and the economy, but also the ways that embroidery lets women show their creativity, identity, and connections in today's world.

4.3 VISUAL FINDINGS FROM THE THREAD TALES CREATIVE-PRACTICE SERIES

The Thread Tales series, which is part of the study's creative practice, looks at how traditional Pakistani embroidery could be used as a storytelling medium in modern settings. The artworks use a very modern style, even though they are based on old stitching traditions that the researcher's female family members have passed down: first the maternal grandmother, then the mother, and now the researcher. Each piece of work shows a step in the researcher's own creative process: coming up with an idea, figuring out how to express it, and finally putting it into words. The series also uses AI-generated concept images to help with motif definition and color planning. This shows that digital technologies can exist alongside hand sewing without taking away from its sensory, emotional, or cultural depth. The three pieces of art together show how traditional methods can still convey personal meaning while being open to new ideas.

4.3.1 STAGE ONE: "THE COSMIC DREAM"

The Cosmic Dream is where the researcher's creative investigation starts. The figure hanging over a black cotton backdrop shows the first, unclear stage of seeing a new way for inherited craft. The main body is made of gold satin stitching, which hints at ancestry and the cultural importance of handmade items that have been passed down through the years. The spirals around them are made of chain-stitched beads in many colors, which represent growing creativity. The beads that are spread out remind us of family history. This project makes it clear that

embroidery can be both a personal archive and a speculative medium by using stitching as a starting point for reinterpretation instead of a limit.



Fig. 1 "The Cosmic Dream": Rough sketch, AI-generated concept image, and final hand-embroidered artwork.

4.3.2 STAGE TWO: "THE DREAMER AND THE LIGHT"

The second piece of art shows the moment when someone becomes aware of an idea. The seated figure holding the spark of light stitched in bright yellows and golds represents clarity and direction in the researcher's creative process. The rhythmic movement of colored threads around the figure echoes both inherited stitch language and the growth of individual interpretation. At this stage, the researcher begins to cultivate a narrative identity that is distinct from, yet interconnected with, familial tradition, indicating the transition from imagination to understanding. The visual interaction of new symbolic motifs and traditional approaches illustrates that resurrection emerges through reinterpretation rather than replication.



Fig. 2 "The Dreamer and the Light": Rough sketch, AI-generated concept image, and final hand-embroidered artwork.

4.3.3 STAGE THREE: "THE AWAKENING OF COLOR"

The finished piece has an upright figure that sends multicolored thread-butterflies into a starry background. These butterflies represent ideas that have changed over time—patterns that start in cultural memory but turn into modern forms of art. The upward movement represents artistic freedom and confidence, while the mix of silk and cotton threads shows how tradition and modernity can live together. This piece represents the researcher's journey from learning to becoming, from inheriting stitches to using them

as tools for telling stories. The artwork shows how hand sewing can be a live, autobiographical process that keeps family craft traditions alive while also changing them with technology and personal vision.



Fig.3. "The Awakening of Color": Rough sketch, AI-generated concept image, and final hand-embroidered artwork..

4.4 INTEGRATING PARTICIPANT NARRATIVES WITH CREATIVE-PRACTICE INSIGHTS

Even though mechanized textiles are becoming more popular, the Thread Tales artworks and the interview results show that hand embroidery in Pakistan still has cultural and emotional value. The participants' descriptions of stitching as a means of personal expression, inherited knowledge, and a link to familial identity resonate with the researcher's creative endeavors. The embroidered series shows these themes in pictures, moving from inspiration to clarity and then to creative change.

Ayesha and Farzana thought of embroidery as a way to be mindful, proud, and connected to tradition. Shazia and Naila, on the other hand, thought of it as a way to make money. These common ideas are clear in how the artworks were made, which used digital concept development and modern narrative symbolism to give new meaning to traditional stitching. The interviews and visual data collectively indicate that revival occurs not solely through technical preservation but also through reconceptualizing embroidery as a medium that transmits personal identity and cultural memory into modern contexts.

4.5 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The results indicate that, despite increasing mechanization, hand needlework remains culturally significant in Pakistan. Interviewees said that sewing is a way for them to express themselves, connect with their family, and learn about their culture. The Thread Tales artworks graphically expand these ideas by combining traditional techniques with modern storytelling elements and digital concept development. When embroidery is reimagined as a living, expressive medium instead of being preserved solely as a traditional craft, it can undergo a renaissance, as evidenced by interviews and insights from creative practices. This

shows that hand embroidery can be both a place for new artistic ideas and a record of culture.

V. CONCLUSION

This study integrated the researcher's creative-practice series, Thread Tales, with interviews of female embroiderers to examine the revival of hand needlework in Pakistan. The results show that, even though the fashion industry uses machine-made fabrics, embroidery is still a way to remember culture, express feelings, and pass on knowledge from one generation to the next. Participants characterized stitching, esteemed for its narrative profundity yet increasingly overshadowed by mechanized production, as both significant and susceptible.

The Thread Tales artworks show how to come up with new ideas for classic stitches through modern storytelling, digital concept creation, and self-reflection. The series shows that revival depends on both keeping craft skills alive and giving them new meaning by combining old ways with new visual language. A. The study finds that hand embroidery is still a creative and culturally strong way to make things. Its future strength lies in approaches that honor tradition while embracing innovation, ensuring that the narratives conveyed through thread continue to evolve in modern design contexts.

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